



Cuavs*: Centers for perpetrators of violence. An effective perspective to counter violence against women

Report of the online seminar
March 8, 2024

* CUAVs are Centres for male perpetrators of gender violence in Italy



The report

This report was written for the EUROJUSTICE and PRE-AND-POST - Trial Alternative Justice (GA No. 101092130) projects, co-funded by the European Commission.

The objective of these projects is to promote European legal culture in the national context through training events, in-person and online, to stimulate dialogue among practitioners, legal workers and legal experts on specific issues, such as, for example, gender-based violence. The online seminar “Cuav: Centers for perpetrators of violence. An effective perspective on countering violence against women” constituted an advanced training initiative aimed at legal practitioners designed to address the clinical side of gender-based violence in its many facets.

This report outlines the most relevant topics addressed during the seminar, which took place on the Zoom platform last March 8, 2024 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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Roles and responsibilities

Prof. Brian Vanzo – president of Ares APS Center; gave an introductory report “The Cuav between associationism and institutions: network relations, organization and identity”.

Dr. Umberto Battaglia – clinical manager; Dr. Alessia Bertozzo - risk assessment area; gave a presentation on risk assessment and treatment.

Dr. Francesca Casalino – vice-president of Ares APS Center; gave a speech on the dynamics of transformation of the violent man between cultural and clinical aspects.

Dr. Lucrezia Navarra – juvenile area; gave a presentation on the intake and treatment of the male child perpetrator of violence.

Dr. Arianna Donadello – clinical area; gave a speech on sex offenders and Cuav perspective of intervention.

Prof. Brian Vanzo, concluded with the paper on the importance of designing a different male together. Socio-cultural elements for creating effective personal service.

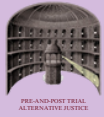
Communication methods

The reports were all conducted via a Zoom platform and facilitated by slide shows to reinforce learning.

Lessons learned

After a brief examination of international legislative documents (Lanzarote Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse[1] and Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence[2]), the experts considered the Italian legislative and procedural framework, highlighting the concordances and criticalities of these transformations. Next, domestic violence was outlined as any form of physical, psychological or sexual violence that affects individuals who have, have had or propose to have an intimate couple relationship and individuals within a more or less extended family unit who have parental or affective relationships. Similarly, the definition of gender-based violence was outlined as any act of gender-based violence that results or may result in physical harm or suffering to the woman, psychological, or sexual, including the threat of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, occurring in the course of public or private life. Finally, intimate partner violence (IPV) was defined as any behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse, and controlling behavior.

As far as Cuavs are concerned, it is essential to first conduct a **risk assessment of recidivism**. Preventing the recurrence of violence by identifying risk factors and intervening on them. Identifying these factors is complex, with more than 134 risk variables; therefore, the Ares APS Association protocol includes a first phase (assessment interviews with two practitioners; 1st



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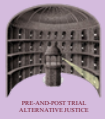
Interview: Confrontation of the crime and legal documentation;
 2nd Interview: Survey of the offender's life, including various aspects such as family history, schooling, work, intimate relationships, and more. PCL-R and HCR-20 are used) and a second phase, with the administration of a statistical protocol, including the PAI, ECR-R, POMS, ROCI B/C, PBI, RQ. During this process, eligibility criteria (substance dependence, unstabilized psychiatric issues, neuropsychological deficits, insufficient understanding of Italian) and some critical issues (low motivation, minimization or justification of the act, victim blaming or denial of the act) are taken into consideration.

Subsequently, the **dynamics of transformation of the male perpetrator of violence** were considered. The Ares APS Association - in accordance with the recent indications of No. 184 of the State-Regions Conference[3] - offers group or individual psycho-educational paths, both on a fortnightly basis for at least 15 months.

The **BABOVA METHOD**, developed by experts for the individual treatment of male violent offenders has the following non-consequential stages:

- **EXPLORATION:** building a good working alliance, various areas are investigated, including self-awareness, relationships, ability to take on others' point of view.
- **AWARENESS OF VIOLENCE:** awareness of having acted and having caused harm to victims and the social fabric, assumption of the legal consequences of violent acts and elaboration of the decision to separate from future violent conduct.
- **ALTERITY:** reinterpretation of experiences with a conscious gaze, analysis of aspects of childhood and adolescence and





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personal experience related to the construct of trust in others.

- **APROJECTIVENESS:** identification of realistic goals for a satisfying and respectful life with others.

For **Sex offenders**, on the other hand, the intervention in Cuavs proposes a treatment practice that is carried out with an initial assessment of the subject who, if suitable, can proceed in the pathway, either individual or group. The group pathway is characterized by:

- Support of participants' personal planning;
- Sharing of experiences;
- Proactivity;
- Compliance with the rules of the setting.

Concluding the course, a further final evaluation is carried out. The work is articulated through three main aspects: transformation of criminogenic needs related directly and indirectly to the crime; goal-based modules and building new efficacy (self-esteem, emotions, otherness, behavior, cognition, and parenting); and finally with a structure in several stages in which thematic modules take shape by taking advantage of interactions among participants and the introduction of activities and reflections.

Teen with antisocial tendency

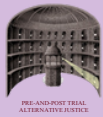
Antisocial tendency includes a range of transgressive behaviors, such as ADHD, aggression, petty delinquency, substance use, and early sexual behavior. This tendency can also be observed in normal individuals, but its severity depends on persistence over time, with some young people beginning to exhibit these behaviors at an early age. Parental input is crucial: escalating



confrontations at an early age can reinforce the child's aggressive behavior, underscoring the importance of family intervention. Witnessed violence, experienced by children exposed to various types of violence, is considered a risk factor for the child's antisocial onset. The Ares APS Association proposes the "CHANCE Project[19]," which offers psychoeducation interventions to counter juvenile deviance through knowledge, sharing results with practitioners for effective treatment.

Finally, territorial network protocols for countering gender-based violence, regional strategies and primary prevention projects implemented by the Ares APS Association were considered.

The meeting ended, after participants' follow-up questions, at 6:30 p.m.



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References

[1] Council of Europe, Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. Lanzarote Convention. 2007. Accessed: May 30, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/lanzarote-convention>

[2] Council of Europe, The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Istanbul Convention. 2011. Accessed: May 30, 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/council-of-europe-convention-on-preventing-and-combating-violence-against-women-and-domestic-violence>

[3] Conferenza Stato-Regioni, Repertorio atto n. 184/CSR. Intesa, ai sensi dell'articolo 8, comma 6, della legge 5 giugno 2003, n. 131, tra il Governo, le Regioni e le Province autonome di Trento e Bolzano sui requisiti minimi dei centri per uomini autori di violenza domestica e di genere. 2022. Accessed: May 30, 2024. [Online]. Available: <http://www.statoregioni.it/it/conferenza-stato-regioni/sedute-2022/seduta-del-14092022/atti/repertorio-atto-n-184csr/>





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